

Alphamstone & Lamarsh Parish Council

CO-OPTION POLICY

Introduction

Parish Councils are permitted to exercise the power to co-opt a person onto the Council to fill a casual vacancy when the requirements to hold an election have not been met (i.e. the vacancy has been the subject of a public notice and less than 10 registered electors have requested an election by the deadline specified by the District Returning Officer.)

To ensure that a fair and transparent process is undertaken, Alphamstone & Lamarsh Parish Council will apply the following

Procedure

1. On receipt of written confirmation, from electoral service of Colchester City Council that the Casual Vacancy can be filled by means of co-option, the Clerk will:
 - a. Advertise the vacancy for 4 weeks on the Council notice boards, website and in the village magazine.
 - b. Advise the Parish Council that the Co-option Policy has been instigated by sending a memo to all Councillors.
2. Applicants are requested to contact the Clerk to express an interest in becoming a Alphamstone & Lamarsh Parish Council lor and the Clerk will then arrange a meeting or discussion to outline the following:
 - a. eligibility criteria
 - b. role requirements including Code of Conduct, Acceptance of Office declaration, Declaration of Interest
 - c. send a copy of The Good Councillor Guide by email.
3. The Clerk will advise the prospective Councillor to attend some Parish Council meetings and Committee meetings, if the prospective Councillor has not already done so
4. If the prospective councillor is still interested, they will be requested to submit a Co-option Application Form (see below) and a CV.
5. Applications will be forwarded, under 'Private and Confidential' along with the agenda for the next Parish Council; the vote for co-option will be detailed on the agenda.
6. Prospective Councillors will be invited to attend the meeting for them to address the Parish Council and for Parish Councillors to ask questions.
7. The Councillors will vote, utilising the 'Co-Opted Councillor Person Specification' criteria (see below), at the meeting.
8. Voting will be according to the statutory requirements in that a successful candidate must receive an absolute majority vote of those present and voting. If there are more than two candidates for one vacancy and no one, at the first count, receives a majority over the aggregate votes given to the rest, the applicant with the least number of votes will be taken off the list. The remainder will be put to the vote again, this process, if necessary, be repeated until an absolute majority is obtained. In the case of an equality of votes the Chair of the meeting has a second or casting vote.
9. The Chair will declare the successful candidate duly elected, if applicable.
10. The Clerk will inform the candidate of the outcome of the vote at the earliest opportunity both by telephone and in writing.
11. The newly appointed Councillor will be invited to attend a meeting with the Clerk and Chair of the Parish Council to complete the Declarations as detailed above, to review and confirm Committee membership and to receive copies of the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Terms of Reference for relevant committees

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12. Following appointment, the Clerk will notify Electoral Services of the new Councillors and ensure documentation is published as required

APPLICATION FOR CO-OPTION

Thank you for your interest in becoming a parish Councillor. Please provide the below information to assist in the council making their decision.

Full Name and Title	
Home Address	
Home Telephone	
Mobile Telephone	
Email Address	

About You:

Please provide the council with some background information about yourself:

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Reasons for applying:

Please provide the council with your reasons for wanting to become a Parish Councillor.

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Please return this completed form to Kevin B. Money - Parish Clerk to Alphamstone & Lamarsh Parish Council via clerk@aldhamparishcouncil.gov.uk or 7 Roach Vale, Colchester, Essex. CO4 3YN

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Your application will be considered at the next available Parish Council meeting, where a vote will be held to decide your co-option to Alphamstone & Lamarsh Parish Council .

All information provided on this application form will remain private and confidential.

- 1. In order to be eligible for co-option as an Alphamstone & Lamarsh Parish Council lor, you must be a British Subject, or a citizen of the commonwealth or the European Union; and on the date of the poll or election, 18 years of age or over; and be able to meet one of the following qualifications set out below:**

Please tick which one applies to you:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| a) I am registered as a local government elector for the parish. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) I have, during the whole of the twelve months preceding the date of my co-option, occupied as owner or tenant, land or other premises in the parish. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) My principle or only place of work during those twelve months have been in the parish. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) I have during the whole of the twelve months resided in the parish or within three miles of it. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- 2. Please note that under Section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972, a person is disqualified from being elected as a Local Councillor or being a member of Local Council if he/she:**

- a) Holds any paid office or employment of the local council (other than the office of Chairman) or of a joint committee on which the Council is represented
- b) Is a person who has been adjudged bankrupt or has made a composition or arrangement with his/her creditors (but see below)
- c) Has within five years before the day of election, or since his/her election, been convicted in the UK, Channel Islands or Isle of Man of any offence and has been sentenced to imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for not less than three months without the option of a fine
- d) Is otherwise disqualified under Part III of the representation of the People Act 1983 for corrupt or illegal practices.

This disqualification for bankruptcy ceases in the following circumstances:

- I. If the bankruptcy is annulled on the grounds that either the person ought not to have been adjudged bankrupt or that his/her debts have been fully discharged
- II. If the person is discharged with a certificate that the bankruptcy was caused by misfortune without misconduct on his/her part
- III. If the person is discharged without such a certificate

In i and ii above, the disqualification ceases on the date of the annulment and discharge respectively.

In iii, it ceases on the expiry of five years from the date of discharge.

DECLARATION

I..... herby confirm that I am eligible for the vacancy of Alphamstone & Lamarsh Parish Council lor and that the information given on this form is a true and accurate record.

Alphamstone & Lamarsh Parish Council

Signature.....Date.....

Co-Opted Councillor Person Specification

COMPETENCY	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Personal Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound knowledge and understanding of local affairs and the local community • Forward thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can bring a new skill, expertise or key local knowledge to the Council
Experience, Skills, Knowledge and Ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good team player • Ability to pick up and run with a variety of projects and a solid interest in local matters • Ability and willingness to represent the Council and their community • Good interpersonal skills and able to contribute opinions at meetings whilst willing to see other views and accept majority decisions • Ability to communicate succinctly and clearly • Ability and willingness to work closely with other members and maintain good working relationships with all members and staff • Ability and willingness to work with the Council's partners (e.g. voluntary groups, other Parish Councils, principle authority, charities) • Ability and willingness to undertake induction training and other relevant training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working or being a member in a local authority or other public body • Experience of working with voluntary and or local community / interest groups • Basic knowledge of legal issues relating to town and parish Councils or local authorities • Experience of delivering presentations
Circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability and willingness to attend meetings of the Council (or meetings of other local authorities and local bodies) at any time and events in the evening and at weekends. 	